How to improve the transition from grade 8 to grade 9

* At end of grade 8 – Grade 9 teachers talk about summer reading

“Book Talks”

* Guidance to recruit (like Platt)

Disconnect it from POS

Include MS Guidance

* When guidance goes to middle school – bring kids, classroom teachers
* One person to coordinate information sharing: middle school to high school
* Homework
* Attendance
* Loss of Credit

What are the consequences of failure?

Ninth grade team configuration……

Middle school model: student/teacher ratio

Consistency among middle schools

Middle school teachers need teeth to make grades “stick”

Kids just under the radar

Study Halls

**Honors**

B – Good Attendance

A – Analytical Thinker

B- Love of Learning

A/B – Good Study Skills

B – Highly Motivated

B – Self Starter

B/A – Organized

A – Critical Thinker

A – DRP/Writing Prompt

A – Superior Writing Skills

B – Independent

A – Abstract Thinking

A/B – Excellent Grades

A – Transfer knowledge practical/abstract

A – Academics

B - Behavior

Should we sort!

Yes!

* Disservice to honors
* Make them use brain in a different way
* Pace
* Pacing
* Preparing kids for AP
* Reflects the real world
  + Sort in grade 8
  + lose kids to private schools
* Without sorting, bright kids may have attendance concerns
* Need the experience of honors/CP level to prepare for college
* Let’s not fool ourselves
  + - No research supports no honors
* K-8 students are leveled
* Math - high, middle, low
* Reading groups
* RTI
* Pacing/Depth
* Sort in Grade 8
* Over estimate the benefits of not grouping

Even in grouping, there are levels of differentiation

No!

* Except for Read 180 in high school have two levels
* Read 180
* Everyone else – no levels
  + Why is differentiation OK lower grades and not in high school?
* Level 2, 3 easier to “mesh”
* Smaller numbers

What’s the data? How are our kids performing?

Semi-Sort

Honors

Collapse Level 2, 3

Level 4

***Things the group agreed need to happen.***

1. Guidance starting visits earlier
2. L.A. teachers – Book Tracks - November “recruiting”
3. Other subjects as well
4. Bring student/including repeater 9th grader when guidance visits m.s.
5. Some kind of sorting – align levels to tiers in RTI/change the language of the grouping
6. Homework
7. Middle School needs “teeth” – retention
8. Alignment has to happen

How do we improve the transition as reference to levels?

Skill-based test at end of 8th grade

* kids don’t test well
* math does that for honors

Educate 8th grade parents to the “end game” in Grade 12

Skills or compliance?

More than one test/measurement – portfolio

Common Assessments

Lists at end of year for high school and grade 8 teachers

Kids signed up in Feb.

Lists come out in April for review

Mid- May

Have Naviance do it

Early April: Scheduling feedback set date for team leader – visits to middle school

Waiver form/procedure

Preparing 8th to 9th grade

(8th and 9th special ed. Meet on IEPs)

Alignment – start moving it

Consistency issues

Placement decision criteria

August: Students